1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

fuel. The usual practice here too is to clear cut up a steep hill or mountain, the lower and more convenient the spot, the more efficient the clearcutting. Weeds, shrubs, grasses, and the Yambaru bamboo have quickly taken the place of the trees. The man induced climax vegetation is grass and shrub.

Forest destruction in Okinawa does not seem to have reached the alarming proportions observed in Japan.[6] The destruction of the war increased the demand for lumber and firewood. This demand accelerated the dangerous practices and led to widespread waste.[7] Fortunately, if Hatsuda is a good example, the roads were poor and underdeveloped, and the mills small. There was some brake on uncontrolled deforestation.

In the accompanying photograph of the Hatsuda forest area, there was access to the summit and the trees there were cut down. For some reason, probably the steepness of the mountain side, the pine and shii on the slopes were not cut. The result was that tall stands of dwarf bamboo took over the spaces on the summit left by the trees, while the trees continued to grow on the mountain sides.

Since the forest is owned by the village, any resident may cut trees for his own use. This custom has few dangers because it is a large forest with a small population in the environs. The cutting is scattered. The villager selects the tree with the consent of the village official in charge of forest control, cuts it and takes it to his courtyard. There is a charge of Y1 for each large tree, or Y1 for five small trees. This money goes to the village office. Villagers' personal needs are a small drain on the forest resource.

The village government also sells wood. In lulls in farming, or when the farmer needs some cash, he may cut trees for the village. Wood cutting for lumber is a year round activity. September to December is the season for cutting firewood. There are two common practices in commercial dealings with wood and lumber. For cutting and gathering firewood, the village office pays Y5 a bundle, Y4 goes to the person cutting the wood, and Y1 to the village office, 60% of which it retains and 40% going to the township office.

Cutting and gathering wood is by no means an easy task. The walk to the forest may take an hour one way, though there may be truck transportation part way. The trees must be cut, the wood chopped up and made into the familiar bundles tied with a stout rush (often the i) and carried back or put in a central location to be picked up later. This marketing of wood on an individual basis is casual and intermittent. More continuous and larger scale exploitation takes place when the village office sells a certain area for cutting. The village takes 60%, the township 40% of the proceeds.

6 Ibid, 285-87. [Text continues on p. 232.--Analyst]
7 Okinawan forests, as cited, 2-3, 5-8.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

Their acts are enforced in each of the villages by the headman. 632 622

The village headman (kuchō) is an intermediary between the people and the township government. He listens to complaints from his people, carries them to the township government for a hearing, and has supervision over official community projects and activities. The headman, like the mayor, is a busy, hardworking man. His pay, insufficient to live on, is midway between a salary and an honorarium. The headman of Hanashiro, for example, received ¥720 per month, Hinatogawa ¥950, and Hatsuda ¥2000 a month.[5] The headman usually has a paid clerk (shoki) who works full time and may receive more pay than the headman. The clerk compiles reports of the village population, assists the headman at meetings, and is a general administrative assistant. 622 [465] [624]

The village headman is elected for a period of one year. There is no campaigning. The election generally is preceded by discussions among the heads of households, village elders, the young men's association and the women's association. These discussions reveal the candidates who are able to do the work and have the leisure and the money to undertake the responsibility. [66]

A village headman usually leads a harried life. Most of them regard their term as a duty to be discharged rather than a beginning of a career in office holding. A former village headman of Hanashiro said that, in addition to the formal meetings he attended at the township office, he had to visit the village office at least 15 times a month on some village problem, such as taxes, health and sanitation, or individual complaints. The village headman of Hinatogawa had a constant succession of problems: reports on overdue fishermen, getting water pipe lines from the mountains to the water tank repaired, taking charge of typhoon damage repair, and trying to have small improvements made in the village. The headman is caught between the township officials who need tax money and the villagers who complain that they have so little money with which to pay them. In Hatsuda, there was the same multiplication of problems involving taxes, need for extra school supplies or repairs, and road maintenance. [651]

Village headmen belong to no special age group. In one township, they ranged in age from 30 to 52. Age is not a decisive factor in their selection, but reputation, literacy, and friendliness are. Though there is a change in administration each year, the incumbent headman stays on one month after the close of his term until the new one has become accustomed to his duties. In some villages, the clerk is elected at the same time as the village headman. [624]

The village headman does not have, nor does he desire, complete responsibility for administering the village. Two groups are available for advice. The headman will not make decisions on important non-routine matters without consulting them. The first of these, the village council 623

5 For comparative purposes, the minimum wage for young Okinawan girls employed as maids for US personnel was about ¥100 ($9.17) per month. [465]

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

666 tion itself is arranged and supervised by an *ad hoc* committee. In 1955 written ballots were cast and counted immediately so that the result was known within a few minutes after the last ballot was in.

622 In contrast to a position in the township administration, which carries high status, equivalent to that of a teacher, the village headman's job is considered a community service and carries little prestige. This does not mean that the headman should not be an individual of high qualities. He must be at least 25 years old; he has to have sufficient education, especially knowledge of Japanese writing characters, to read government documents and to do the required clerical work; he has to be a good accountant and must be proficient in working with the abacus, since all tax collections are supervised by him; he must be community minded and able to enforce regulations in a friendly but efficient way. The rewards are small, the salary less than that of most township officials. The office is held most frequently by young men who have not been out of high school too long. Most recent headmen are between 25 and 30 years of age. Serving in this office may mark the beginning of an administrative career, either in the township office, in the village store, or in business outside Taira. The clerk, appointed ●624 by the headmen to assist in village administration, is also a young man. He too is likely to be headed toward an administrative career.

621 Each village is subdivided into wards, set up originally by Japanese
624 administration to effect greater control over families through the warden. He is a subagent of the headman, and at present he functions [203] mainly as a channel for communications, a useful function in a village like Taira, which covers a large geographical area. Regulations, village meetings, and special events are announced through the warden, and he is often called on to collect delinquent taxes. However, he has little authority and functions more as a neighbor who takes care of necessary contacts between residents and the village administration. Ward members elect him to his honorary office for a one-year term.

623 Village affairs are discussed and legislative action concerning the village initiated by the village council. This group is now partly elected, partly composed of holders of essential offices, such as heads of associations, members of the township assembly, and township officials who live in Taira. The 26 members of the Council are responsible for measures affecting the community, and the headman relies heavily on their advice. Most councilmen are middle aged; few are over 50 years [575] old. Since the head of the Women's Association and the nurse are members, there are at least two female representatives. The youngest councilman is usually the head of the Young People's Association.

623 It is apparent that leadership in the community is always exercised
555

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

by a limited group. The council represents almost all potential leaders. Education and experience in the outside world are the most important qualifications. This is a change from the old days when wealth was also an important factor. An example of a member of township assembly and village council is the man who lived for many years in Brazil (see Chapter 1, p. 374). His leadership is widely recognized and partly due to his successful use of modern farming techniques. Another village leader is a graduate of an agricultural high school, a man of superior intelligence and qualifications who ranked high in an island-wide civil service examination. Another former headman, and now a council member, was born and raised in Japan of Okinawan parents. Although unfamiliar with local dialect and practices, he is well versed in things Japanese and is a financial expert.

The full village council seldom meets. Instead, local matters are discussed among a core of its most active leaders. Noncouncil members, such as the postmaster, policeman, or teachers, may be invited to some meetings. A discussion may start because several villagers want to set aside a special day during which nobody is permitted to go to the mountains to cut firewood, so that more work can be done in the fields. Such a proposal, if approved by the committee of council members, need not be brought before the entire council. Since no formal vote is taken by the council as a rule, friendly discussions decide the issue. Such a decision is then taken directly to a meeting of registered household heads which is held monthly or whenever there are a number of matters to be discussed and voted on. They are presented point by point, first by the headman, next by one or more council members; then discussion is opened to the whole meeting and eventually a vote is taken. This is done in a very relaxed manner and without actually counting the votes, since discussions have continued until there is a general consensus in the group.

Minor matters of immediate importance, such as tax collections, plans for celebrating a holiday, or maintenance work on roads and ditches in parts of the village, are taken up between the headman and wardens in weekly meetings.

The household head meeting is attended by many women who are either registered household heads or have been sent by their husbands or fathers as representatives. Some men may actually be unable to attend; others are disinterested. Failure to send any family representative over 18 years old to a village meeting results in a fine of 20 yen. At one meeting when it seemed as if more women than men were present, the headman joked, "Let's call it a Women's Association Meeting." The women answered, "We are just nice to our husbands, so we

One of his major responsibilities to the township office is tax collection within the village; yet, his actual powers are slight, as nearly all of his official acts are first sanctioned by the villagers or the township office. It seemed to the author that the chief role of the 'kuchō' was as an intermediary between the people and the township office or as an agent for the latter, rather than as an administrator. It would seem that the payment of his salary by the township instead of by the village is symbolic of his actual role. 622 [651] [632]

Assisting the 'kuchō' are several officers the first of which is the assistant mayor ('fuku-kuchō') who is elected at the same time as the mayor and serves for one year. He is paid ¥480 ($4.00) per month, and like the mayor he must be over 27 and a household head. In the absence of the mayor he functions in his place, and on all other occasions he assists him in his work. A village clerk ('shōki') is also elected at the same time as the 'kuchō', and serves for a term of one year; he is paid a salary of ¥700 ($5.83) each month. The main qualifications for this position are that one have a fair amount of education and a good mastery of characters for writing. The job holds little appeal since it demands much of the individual's time and affords little in the way of prestige or pay. In Kanegusuku-ku in December of 1953 three elections were held in an effort to fill this position before someone finally and quite reluctantly accepted it. 624 [465] [465]

An advisory body of four councillors ('hyōgiin') assists the mayor in his administration; they represent each of the four neighborhoods or districts of the village. They are elected at the same time as the mayor, serve for one year, and receive a salary of ¥20 (17¢) per meeting. According to the villagers this body has replaced the earlier yuushi which was an unelected advisory council made up of former village officials, the village equivalent of elder statesmen. The 'kuchō' never undertakes an independent course of action; he first consults the'hyōgiin' and obtains their approval and suggestions before initiating action. 623 [465]

Each village of Kanegusuku-son elects two men to represent it in the township ('son') assembly ('sonkai'); they are elected for a term of four years. Older, mature men who have held several official positions are always selected. They also play a part in village administration and are considered village officials. At all meetings they sit with the officials, and their opinion is much valued. 624 632

All matters of real importance are submitted to the household heads who form the real body politic within the village. The electorate for the village consists exclusively of household heads; to vote in a village election one must be a household head or one appointed by him to vote in his place, but in township and national elections universal suffrage obtains. At one village election which the author witnessed in December of 1953 balloting began as soon as the meeting was called to order without any preliminary speeches or nominations. It was later stated that the election and likely candidates had been informally discussed among the village leaders and household heads so that there was no need for preliminaries. The same situation seemed to prevail when meetings were held to discuss matters of general concern; the apparent unanimity of opinion and agreement indicated that informal concordance had been reached well in advance of formal discussion and decision. 621 592 666

621 For administrative purposes villages are subdivided into sections or
179 neighborhoods called 'han' or 'kumi'. There is considerable variation in the use of these terms throughout Okinawa, in part occasioned by the recency of their introduction and by the confusion following the end of the war. In 1940
[648] the Japanese government ordered all municipalities ('shi-chō-son') subdivided into 'rimpō-han' (settlement sections) which in turn were subdivided into 'tonarigumi' (neighborhood groups). The move was a political one designed to insure more effective control; the divisions were often quite arbitrary and had little relation to social groupings. The term 'kumi', however, had been in use for a long time in both Japan and Okinawa, referring to a group of households. That
[178] these subdivisions have survived into the postwar period indicates that they are fulfilling a function necessary to village administration.

621 A large village such as Henza (of Henza Shima), which has a population
624 of 3800, is subdivided into 5 'han' each headed by an official called 'hanchō'. Every 'han' is subdivided into 'kumi'; there are 41 'kumi' in the village, approximately 8 to each 'han'. Each 'kumi' contains from 12-20 houses; the head of the 'kumi' is the 'kumichō'. In a smaller village such as Kanegusuku-ku which has a population of 507, the 'han' no longer exists; instead the term 'kumi' is applied to the four subdivisions of the village. In Kanegusuku the 'kumichō' functions as the intermediary between the 'kuchō' and the people of the area; there are on the average 25 houses in each 'kumi'. 'Kumichō' are elected each year by the 'kumi' though in actuality the position is really rotated among the households within the 'kumi'. One of the chief functions of the 'kumi' is to provide labor for community work projects. When the township office requests that the 'kuchō' have his village repair a section of a road, he calls in the 'kumichō' and tells them how many workers will be needed. The 'kumichō' notify the household heads within their 'kumi' and the households supply in rotation the needed labor. When local clean-up is in order as preparation for a township inspection, the 'kumichō' supervises the work in his area. Tax collections for village finances are generally made by him, and when tax collections are made by the township, he notifies his constituents as to the time and place of payment.

The importance of the 'kumichō' or 'hanchō' is dependent on the physical nature of the village and its size. In a small tightly-nucleated village like Kanegusuku the 'kumichō' functions mainly as an intermediary or messenger between the 'kuchō' and the people of the 'kumi' and as a foreman on their work details. In a larger village whose 'han' are scattered into more isolated neighborhoods or settlements the 'hanchō' often functions more like a 'kuchō'. In Kanegusuku the divisions are more or less arbitrary ones, and there is definitely no feeling of strong identity with a particular 'kumi'. However, in the village of Tomoyose where Pitts studied, the isolated settlement of Nanahan (literally ("Han Seven") felt itself to be a distinct unit and functioned not unlike a very small village.

621 Most villages have a small building set aside for use as an office or
344 meeting place. These are usually called muraya in Okinawan or 'jimusho' in Japanese. In a large village like Henza the office is nearly as large as those of some of the smaller 'son', containing desks, telephone, records, and a full-time staff. In Kanegusuku a small bare hut large enough for only a dozen people suffices. When village meetings are held, the officials sit inside the building while the people sit outside facing them. Village records are stored in the home of the 'kuchō' or the clerk.